

# Discussion Questions

## INTRODUCTION

With self-help resources all around, many of us desire to improve ourselves in some area of life. What can we learn from one of the early Jesus followers that gives us focus on what we can do to truly be at our best.

## GETTING STARTED

1. What's the funniest or strangest thing you've ever been passionate about?
2. Talk about something that you were once passionate about but are no longer passionate about. What caused this change?

## BIBLE IDEA

3. What goal are you seeking? To what degree are you willing to suffer to obtain it?
4. It's been said that our affections often grow towards our investments. Wherever we put our time, money and energy also ends up receiving our passion and interest. Think about the things you are passionate about. How well do your life-purpose, your priorities, and your passions line up?
  - a. Are your passions given to things that won't fulfill your purpose and priorities?
  - b. How can you keep your purpose, priorities and passions in synch?
5. Read Acts 9:15-16. What important information did God want Ananias to give to Paul? What is the connection between pursuing God's purpose and suffering?
6. Examine Philippians 3:7-16 and have each person answer one of these questions
  - a. What do these verses say about how Paul changed his purpose & priorities?
  - b. How did Paul deal with competing priorities?
  - c. How did Paul feel about the things he lost?
  - d. What was the trade-off for the things he lost?
  - e. How did Paul want to identify with Christ, in order to "know Him"?
  - f. What was Paul's view of suffering?
  - g. What was the prize Paul was looking forward to?
  - h. What does it mean to "live up to what we have already attained"? Would you say you are doing that?

## NEXT STEPS

7. What enemies do you have to fight in order to maintain your passion? How can you cultivate and fuel passion?
8. Where have you let your passion slip?
  - a. Where do you need to start living up to what you have already attained?
  - b. What is God asking you to reprioritize? What are you willing to suffer in order to attain the goal God has put before you? How can we support you?

*Answers: goal; suffer; clear; suffer*

*Bible Reading Plan for the week of June 21st; Isaiah 51-57*

## A Follower At Their Best

### The Followers #3

**Philippians 3:7-16** <sup>7</sup> But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in <sup>[a]</sup> Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. <sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

#### Featured Follower: Paul of Tarsus

...“My chosen instrument to carry My name before Gentiles, kings, and the sons of Israel. I will certainly show him how much he must suffer for my name” (Acts 9:15-16).

Philippians 3:7-16

Passion – Pursuit of something valuable; not held back by things less valuable.

Two “Passion” Questions:

(1) What \_\_\_\_\_ are you seeking?

(2) To what degree are you willing to \_\_\_\_\_ to obtain it?

A follower is at their best when their goal is \_\_\_\_\_, and they are willing to \_\_\_\_\_ to achieve it.